Product specific economic zone for I.T. industries in Mangalore

2954. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the Special Economic Zone Scheme contained in the Foreign Trade Policy, 2004—09;

(b) whether Government of Karnataka has sought the approval of the Centre for establishing a 'Product Specific Economic Zone for I.T. Industries' at Mangalore; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard with Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Chapter 7 of the Foreign Trade Policy (2004—09) contains the policy framework for setting up and operation of Special Economic Zones.

(b) and (c) A proposal received from Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board through the State Government for setting up of a Special Economic Zone for Information Technology sector at Mangalore is under consideration.

Problems of coffee growers.

2955. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that coffee growers in the country and more particularly in Southern States are facing a lot of problems due to lower prices of coffee and resultant low investment in this sector;

(b) if so, whether the coffee growers have been demanding relief from the Central Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) Owing to the crisis arising out of low prices of coffee over the last few years, coffee growers

have been seeking relief mainly pertaining to debt restructuring. The matter is under consideration.

Russian investment in Indian Economic Infrastructure

2956. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has expressed keennees to invest in India's economic infrastructure particularly in energy, steel, bio-technology and other knowledge based industries including IT and Software;

(b) if so, whether India accepted the proposals in this regard;

(c) if so, whether any agreement has been signed with Russia;

(d) if so, the details therefor; and

(e) what are the steps being taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (e) No specific Indo-Russian Agreement was signed recently, which envisages Russian Investments in India particularly in Energy, Steel, Bio-Technology and other knowledge based industries including IT and Softwares. The expansion of Economic and Commercial relationship between India and Russia was discussed during the 10th Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission held in New Delhi in November, 2004 and also during the visit of President of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Valdimir Putin to India in December, 2004. Energy, IT, Banking, Communications, Bio-Technology were identified as among the potential areas of cooperation between India and Russia. The following five Memoranda of Understanding in Banking and Energy sectors were signed during the visit of Russian President:

1. MoU between ECGC, EXIM Bank & Vnesheconom Bank
2. MoU between SBI and SBER Bank
3. MoU between Canara Bank and SBER Bank
4. MoU between GAIL and GAZPROM
5. MoU between GAIL and STROITRANSGAZ

The Concerned agencies/organizations in both the countries are taking necessary actions for the implementation of these MoU.